

*Prin Sihanouk, Norodom*  
*CIA N Cambodia*

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## A Prince Gives Views on CIA and Cambodia

By HENRY J. TAYLOR

I HAVE in hand a letter from Prince Norodom Sihanouk, the chief of state of Cambodia, which borders South Viet Nam.

For years, strategic Cambodia was our staunch friend. American taxpayers' aid to it has been tremendous. But it has denounced us now.

### ANTI-RED

Cambodia had no truck with the Reds and we have always told her that we regarded her policy of strict neutrality as completely understandable and entirely satisfactory.

But Cambodia was profoundly shocked by the Washington pressure against the regime in nearby Saigon, the murder of the brothers Diem and Washington's instant recognition of the army chiefs who did the Palace killings. The effect on the leaders of the Cambodian government was: "But for the grace of God, there go I."

Cambodia promptly refused to accept more American money or personnel and expelled all U. S. military, economic and information missions, blaming much on our Central Intelligence Agency. All this has greatly aided our enemies in South Viet Nam by complicating nearly everything we want to do militarily along that border.

The letter from Prince Norodom Sihanouk is rare from the head of a government. It is self-serving, of course, and there are unmentioned causes beyond our control that also influenced his nation's actions. But the letter does indicate once more that we will never do with dollars what we fail to do with brains.

The Prince says this:

"We abandoned with profound regret the economic and military aid your government generously provided. Cambodia, fully recognizing the unwelcome fact that the path ahead would be a difficult one.

"The great advantages were outweighed by certain restrictions imposed on our freedom of action, and by the somewhat ambiguous attitude adopted by certain American officials toward Cambodia's policy of strict neutrality.

"This attitude was demonstrated as long ago as February, 1959, when an American official in Phnompenh, alleged to be a member of your Central Intelligence Agency, was found to be implicated in a dangerous conspiracy designed to lead to the secession of two of our northern provinces.

"It was perhaps inevitable, after such a shock to our confidence, that a bomb outrage some months later at the Pal-

ace, that nearly cost my parents—their Majesties the King and Queen—their lives, should have aroused certain unworthy suspicions regarding the identity of the individuals who provided the conspirators with the expert technical knowledge displayed in concocting the parcel containing the infernal machine.

"Finally, information of increasingly circumstantial nature to the effect that rebel bands, installed close to our frontiers, and equipped with powerful wireless transmitters, were receiving supplies from a clandestine American organization over which the American authorities appeared to exercise no control, contributed to our decision to renounce further aid from an ostensibly friendly government, engaged—it would seem—in financing activities designed to encompass our government's ruin.

"It is in nowise my wish to appear ungrateful for the assistance Cambodia has received from the American taxpayer, whose generous desire to help economically-backward countries is deserving of the highest praise. But it seems to us that, until clandestine activities and policy-making proclivities of this sort are brought firmly under control, American policy in this part of the world will continue to appear double-faced, while the assurances of good intentions readily provided by American ambassadors will continue to be received with some skepticism . . .